

Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

www.iowadnr.gov

Editor: Mick Klemesrud, 515/281-8653
mick.klemesrud@dnr.iowa.gov

Feb. 24, 2009

1. State Park Campsites Going Quickly for Memorial Day Weekend
2. Jefferson Man Faces Multiple Game and Burglary Violations
3. DNR's Boddy to Give Welcoming Address for Agritourism Conference at Honey Creek Resort State Park
4. Deer Racks Measured March 14 at Rathbun Hatchery
5. 5th Annual Prairie Du Chien Bald Eagle Appreciation Day Feb. 28

STATE PARK CAMPSITES GOING QUICKLY FOR MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

DES MOINES - Campers snapped up electrical campsites in Iowa State Parks for Memorial Day Weekend quickly on Sunday, reserving all but the handicap accessible sites at Backbone, Lake Ahquabi, Lake Anita, Lake of Three Fires, Ledges, Rock Creek and Maquoketa Caves. Only one or two reservable electrical sites remain at Elk Rock, Ledges, McIntosh Woods, Prairie Rose, Union Grove and Wilson Island state parks.

Campsites can be viewed and reserved at www.reserveiaparks.com 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Reservations are also taken over the phone by calling 1-877-IAPARKS between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone center is closed on state holidays. Information on Iowa State Parks is available at www.exploreiowaparks.com.

"It doesn't take long for the campsites to fill for the holiday weekends," said Kevin Szcodronski, chief of the State Parks Bureau for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. "Once these reservable campsites are taken, campers will have to make plans to arrive early to secure one of the first-come, first-serve sites."

Brushy Creek, Bellevue, Beed's Lake, Black Hawk, Emerson Bay, Honey Creek north campground, Lake Keomah, Pine Lake, Stone and Wapsipinicon state parks all have nine or fewer electrical sites remaining that can be reserved.

"Our campers have a connection to their favorite park. If it were possible, many of them would camp on the same site, next to their same neighbors for each holiday," Szcodronski said.

The DNR is working with contractors to get Walnut Woods and George Wyth state parks repaired from the storms and floods of 2008. If the work is completed before

the Memorial Day Weekend, both parks will be available for camping on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Szcodronski said campers should be aware that Lake Darling and Lake Wapello state parks in southeast Iowa are undergoing lake renovations. Lake Darling will be completely drained for the 2009 season to fix the outlet structure in the dam and to improve the habitat in the lake. Lake Wapello was lowered last year to fix a leak in the dam, to renovate the fishery and improve the in-lake habitat. Lake Wapello will be refilling this spring.

In southwest Iowa, Green Valley State Park is closed while the campground is completely renovated. The schedule calls for the campsite work to be finished by mid summer.

Media Contact: Kevin Szcodronski, chief, State Parks Bureau, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-281-8674.

###

JEFFERSON MAN FACES MULTIPLE GAME AND BURGLARY VIOLATIONS

JEFFERSON — A Jefferson man is facing several charges relating to game violations and burglary.

Derek Eugene Ott, 27, of Jefferson, was charged by DNR conservation officers on December 4, 2008 for no hunting license, no habitat fee, no fur harvesters license, unlawful possession of raccoon (three counts), unlawful possession of buck whitetail deer (four counts), fifth degree theft, possession of stolen property and trespassing.

A judgment against him was filed in Greene County District Court on Feb. 12 for no hunting license, no habitat fee, no fur harvesters license, unlawful possession of raccoon (three counts), unlawful possession of buck whitetail deer (one count) and fifth degree theft. He also received a magistrate ordered five year suspension of his hunting and trapping privileges and liquidated damages assessed against him in the amount of \$5,600.

Ott is also awaiting trial on three counts of Burglary 3rd Degree (Class D Felony) and Ongoing Criminal Conduct (Class B Felony) by the Greene County Sheriff's Office as a result of the property seized by DNR conservation officers during a consent search of his residence and later search warrant served by the Greene County Sheriff's Office.

The investigation of Ott by DNR Conservation Officers Dan Pauley and Nathan Haupert began in early December after receiving a complaint of someone stealing traps from road ditches around the Jefferson area. The investigation led to the recovery of many stolen traps from as long ago as 10 years. Traps from at least six different owners were identified. Many other traps were not able to be tied back to their original owners. The investigation also led to the discovery of the four illegal deer and three illegal raccoons.

During the investigation, Haupert and Pauley located items that were believed to be stolen during burglaries around the Jefferson area. Those items were seized and turned

over to the Greene County Sheriff's Office. Those items were positively identified as being stolen during the burglaries.

Hauptert then assisted the Greene County Sheriff's Office by providing information that led to the issuance of a search warrant. Hauptert assisted with the execution of the search warrant and more stolen property was recovered and believed to be from at least three other burglaries from around the Jefferson area.

For further information, contact Conservation Officers Nathan Hauptert at 712-330-8462, Dan Pauley at 515-370-0422, or the Greene County Sheriff's Office at 515-386-2136.

###

DNR'S BODDY TO GIVE WELCOMING ADDRESS FOR AGRITOURISM CONFERENCE AT HONEY CREEK RESORT STATE PARK

DES MOINES -- Pat Boddy, DNR deputy director, will provide the welcoming address at the second annual Visit Iowa Farms conference on March 7. The conference will take place at Honey Creek Resort State Park on Rathbun Lake in Appanoose County.

The agritourism conference is targeted to landowners and farmers interested in developing value-added agricultural tourism destinations, such as orchards, tree farms and more. Agritourism also provides a venue for nature-based recreation such as fishing, canoeing, hunting access and wildlife watching.

"Many people interested in developing agritourism also promote and protect the outdoors," said Boddy. "We are excited to partner with these entrepreneurs, to share ideas for increasing tourism in Iowa's rural areas, and to host this conference at our new state park resort."

Sessions at the one-day conference will include agritourism marketing ideas and planning, attracting visitors and bus groups, increasing on-farm sales, and addressing business issues such as safety considerations, regulations and legal issues.

For complete agenda and registration information, visit www.visitiowafarms.org or call the ISU Extension Value Added Agriculture office at (515) 294-9483.

Partial funding for the conference is provided by the North Central Risk Management Education Center and the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Additionally, an Iowa Agritourism Working Group has helped plan the conference and includes: Iowa State University Extension, the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, the Iowa Department of Agriculture, Iowa Department of Economic Development, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area, Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association, Iowa Winegrowers Association, Greater Des Moines Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Des Moines Chapter of Buy Fresh, Buy Local.

For information about scheduling conferences and events at Honey Creek Resort State Park, visit www.honeycreekresort.com, or call (877) 677-3344.

For more information, contact Marsha Laux, program coordinator, Iowa State University Extension, Value Added Agriculture Program, 319-796-4362, mlaux@iastate.edu or Christa Hartsook, communications specialist, Iowa State University Extension, Value Added Agriculture Program, 515-294-4430, hartc@iastate.edu

###

DEER RACKS MEASURED MARCH 14 AT RATHBUN HATCHERY

MORAVIA - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will host a trophy deer antler measuring seminar from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., on March 14, at the Rathbun Fish Hatchery, near Moravia.

Official scorers for Boone and Crockett, Pope and Young and the DNR wildlife staff and conservation officers will be on hand to score deer antlers and all eligible antlers will be entered into the record book.

Antlers will be scored for any deer taken in Iowa from any year in the past.

###

5TH ANNUAL PRAIRIE DU CHIEN BALD EAGLE APPRECIATION DAY FEB. 28

Come and enjoy bald eagles along the Upper Mississippi River during Prairie du Chien Bald Eagle Appreciation Day on Saturday, February 28, 2009, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Event activities will be centered along the Mississippi River at the Prairie du Chien, Wis. Regional Tourism Center, 211 S. Main Street, and the adjacent AmericInn Lodge and Suites. Ken Block, Chief Ranger at Effigy Mounds National Monument, touted Bald Eagle Appreciation Day as an "opportunity to learn about bald eagles and all of the other wonderful natural resources of the Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin and McGregor / Marquette, Iowa region directly from local experts. Our location is situated in a perfect place to experience the outdoors - the heart of the 261-mile long Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge."

During the week days preceding and on Saturday, artwork created by the students of Bluff View Intermediate School art teacher Lisa Lewke will be on display in storefronts along Black Hawk Avenue, in the heart of Prairie du Chien's business and restaurant district. A large Bald Eagle Quilt will be displayed at the Pickett Fence on Black Hawk Avenue by Saturday.

On Saturday, live bald eagle programs presented by staff of the National Eagle Center of Wabasha, Minnesota, will anchor the day of presentations at the AmericInn. The first live eagle program will be presented at 11 a.m. and a second at 1 p.m. in the lobby of the AmericInn. To start the day, Neil Rettig's "American Eagle" episode from the PBS Nature series will be shown at 9 a.m. in the AmericInn's conference room. A special talk, "Bald Eagles on the Refuge," will be presented in the lobby at 9:30 a.m. by

Tim Yager, FWS Refuge Manager. Biologist David Heath, Wisconsin DNR, will then give a talk about shad, a favorite food of bald eagles, at 10 a.m. In between the live eagle programs, from 12:30 to 1 p.m., a special presentation of "Lessons from the Eagle; Music from the River," will be given by Jon "Hawk" Stravers of the Audubon Society - Upper Mississippi River Initiative.

Educational displays and activities at the Regional Tourism Center will include agency exhibits, children's craft activities and a life-size eagle nest replica displayed by Pat Schlarbaum, Iowa DNR wildlife technician (weather depending). Educational books and other items from the bookstore at Effigy Mounds will be on sale – including Neil Rettig's "American Eagle" DVD. A second eagle's nest replica will be available across the river at the Effigy Mounds Visitor Center.

Throughout the day, the true centerpiece of Bald Eagle Appreciation Day will be outdoor viewing of live bald eagles. Pat Schlarbaum, Jon Stravers, Dennis Kirschbaum, Laura Johnson and personnel from the Iowa DNR, Wisconsin DNR, National Park Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service will staff outdoor bald eagle viewing points in Prairie du Chien and other regional locations they will identify that day as having good eagle activity. These birding experts will be available to answer questions, explain exhibits and lead car caravan trips to other eagle watching locations. Maps & directions for self-guided field trips to eagle watching locations will be provided.

Neil Rettig's "American Eagle" episode from the PBS Nature series will be shown again at 5 p.m. in the AmericInn's conference room to conclude the day of activities.

For more information, contact the Prairie du Chien Chamber of Commerce / Tourism Council at 800-732-1673, www.prairieduchien.org; pdccoc@mhtc.net; or Effigy Mounds National Monument, 563-873-3491, www.nps.gov/efmo, kenneth_block@nps.gov.

Bald Eagle Appreciation Day Events & Activities

Saturday February 28, 2009

Location: Prairie du Chien Regional Tourism Center

9 AM - 3 PM

- Outdoor Viewing with Spotting Scopes & Binoculars
- Eagle viewing stations outside of the Tourism Center (and other nearby locations)
- Bald eagle nest replica
- Indoor exhibits
- Children's activities and educational sales items Location: AmericInn Lobby

Special Talks & Videos

9 AM -Neil Rettig's "American Eagle" episode from the PBS Nature series

9:30 AM - Talk: Bald Eagles on the Refuge - by Tim Yager, FWS Refuge Manager

10 AM - Talk: Shad - Food Fit for an Eagle - by David Heath, Wisconsin DNR

11 AM - Live Bald Eagle Program (see below)

12:30 PM - Special Talk: Lessons from the Eagle; with Music from the River - by Jon Stravers, Audubon Society

1 PM - Live Bald Eagle Program (see below)

5 PM - Neil Rettig's "American Eagle" episode from the PBS Nature series

Live Bald Eagle Programs -National Eagle Center of Wabasha Staff

11 AM - 12 PM

1 PM - 2 PM

**For more information, contact Ken Block with the National Park Service at
563.873.3491**

###